

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device for actuating movement of a sample carrier during in vitro testing, the device comprising a movable component for supporting the sample carrier in a container, the movable component comprising a drivable component actuatable by non-contacting coupling with a driving source.
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2. The device according to claim 1, wherein the drivable component comprises a magnet for magnetic coupling with the driving source.
- 10 3. The device according to claim 1, wherein the movable component comprises a support member for securing the sample carrier to the movable component.
4. An apparatus for actuating movement of a sample carrier during in vitro testing, the apparatus comprising:
15 (a) a container; and
(b) a movable component disposed in the container for supporting a sample carrier therein, the movable component drivable by non-contacting coupling with a driving source.
- 20 5. The apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the container comprises a bottom and an opening in the bottom for allowing access to the interior of the container.
6. The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the container comprises a fitting mounted at the opening for allowing connection with a conduit.
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7. The apparatus according to claim 4, comprising a closure member sealing the container for substantially preventing loss of contents from the container during movement of the sample carrier.
- 30 8. The apparatus according to claim 4, comprising a driving component disposed in non-contacting relation with the movable component for non-contacting coupling with the movable component.

9. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the driving component comprises a magnet for magnetic coupling with the movable component.
- 5 10. The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the driving component comprises a movable platform for supporting one or more magnets.
11. An apparatus for actuating movement of a sample carrier during in vitro testing, the apparatus comprising:
- 10 (a) a container;
- (b) a movable component disposed in the container for supporting a sample carrier therein; and
- (c) a closure member sealing the container for substantially preventing loss of contents from the container during actuation of the movable component by a driving source.
- 15 12. The apparatus according to claim 11, comprising a pick-up component positioned in the container for coupling with the movable component to facilitate handling of the movable component.
- 20 13. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the pick-up component is mounted to the closure member.
14. The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the pick-up component comprises a magnet for magnetically coupling with the movable component.
- 25 15. A container for containing an actuatable sample carrier during in vitro testing, the container comprising a first container section having a first section volume for containing a drivable component drivable by a driving source, and a second container section having a second section volume different from the first section volume for containing a sample carrier connected to the drivable component.
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16. The apparatus according to claim 15, comprising a closure member sealing the container for substantially preventing loss of contents from the container during actuation of the sample carrier.
- 5 17. The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the second container section comprises a bottom and an opening in the bottom for allowing access to the interior of the container.
18. A closure device for sealing a container, the closure device comprising a body for covering an opening of a container, and a magnet attached to the body for coupling with
10 a sample carrier holder.
19. The closure device according to claim 18, comprising a central portion insertable into the container, the central portion extending from the body and supporting the magnet.
- 15 20. The closure device according to claim 19, wherein the central portion includes a surface facing outwardly from the central portion for sealingly contacting an inside surface of the container.
21. A support device for supporting a sample carrier, the support device comprising:
20 (a) a body;
(b) first and second support members attached to the body and axially spaced for securing a sample carrier between the first and second support members; and
(c) a coupling member attached to the body for coupling with a driving source.
- 25 22. The support device according to claim 21, wherein at least one of the first and second support members is axially adjustable along the body for varying the space between the first and second support members.
- 30 23. The support device according to claim 21, wherein the first and second support members comprise respective first and second surfaces for contacting opposing ends of the sample carrier.

24. The support device according to claim 23, wherein the first and second surfaces are tapered for providing full contact with sample carrier ends of differing dimensions.
- 5 25. The support device according to claim 21, wherein the coupling member comprises a magnet.
26. A method for agitating a sample carrier, comprising:
- 10 (a) providing a movable component in a container, the movable component supporting a sample carrier carrying material releasable into a medium; and
- (b) actuating the movable component to move in the container by coupling the movable component with a driving source disposed in non-contacting relation to the movable component.
- 15 27. The method according to claim 26, wherein actuating comprises reciprocating the movable component along an axis of the container.
28. The method according to claim 26, wherein actuating comprises rotating the movable component about an axis of the container.
- 20 29. The method according to claim 26, wherein actuating comprises magnetically coupling the movable component with the driving source.
30. The method according to claim 26, comprising sealing the container and maintaining the container in a sealed state to substantially prevent loss of contents from the container
- 25 while the movable component is actuated.
31. The method according to claim 26, comprising coupling the movable component with a pick-up component to facilitate handling of the sample carrier.
- 30 32. The method according to claim 31, wherein coupling the movable component with the pick-up component comprises establishing a magnetic coupling between the movable component and the pick-up component.

33. The method according to claim 32, wherein coupling the movable component with the pick-up component comprises providing electric current to the pick-up component.
- 5 34. The method according to claim 31, comprising manipulating the sample carrier by handling a closure member adapted to seal the container, wherein the pick-up component is mounted to the closure member.
- 10 35. The method according to claim 26, comprising releasing material carried by the sample carrier into a medium contained in the container during actuation of the movable component.
- 15 36. A method for manipulating a sample carrier containing releasable material, comprising:
(a) providing a closure member for sealing an open end of a container; and
(b) coupling the closure member with a support device supporting a sample carrier, whereby the sample carrier can be manipulated by handling the closure member without manually contacting the sample carrier.
- 20 37. The method according to claim 36, wherein coupling comprises magnetic coupling.
38. The method according to claim 36, comprising positioning the sample carrier in the container by mounting the closure member at the open end of the container while the support device is coupled with the closure member.
- 25 39. The method according to claim 38, comprising decoupling the support device from the closure member to enable the support device to operate in the container independently of the closure member.
- 30 40. The method according to claim 36, wherein the support device is positioned in the container and the closure member is mounted at the open end of the container, and coupling comprises actuating the support device toward the closure member.

41. The method according to claim 40, wherein actuating comprises establishing a non-contacting coupling relation between the support device and a driving component.
- 5 42. The method according to claim 41, wherein a magnet movable with the support device is disposed in the container, and actuating the support device toward the closure member comprises coupling the magnet with the driving component and actuating movement of the driving component.
- 10 43. The method according to claim 36, wherein coupling occurs while the support device is positioned in the container and the closure member is mounted at the open end of the container, and the method further comprises removing the sample carrier from the container while the support device is coupled with the closure member by removing the closure member from the container.